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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 002961

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/30/2014
TAGS: MARR PARM PREL RS NATO UNGA
SUBJECT: ITALY'S VIEWS ON NEW AGENDA
COALITION/NON-STRATEGIC NUKEs

REF: SECSTATE 163889

Classified By: A/POLMINCOUNS PAULA THIEDE FOR REASONS 1.4 (B)
AND (D)

¶11. (C) POLMILOFF on July 29 conveyed reftel points to MFA Nonproliferation/Arms Control Office Director Filippo Formica, Formica's deputy Piero Sardi, and MFA NATO Office Director Giovanni Brauzzi. Brauzzi said he fully agreed with our point that NATO Allies should use the High Level Group (HLG) to discuss non-strategic nuclear weapons (NSNW), and positions should be coordinated within the Alliance. The MFA will reemphasize this point with the Defense Ministry's HLG representative. Nevertheless, Brauzzi was not willing to exclude as unhelpful a follow-on NATO-New Agenda Coalition (NAC) NSNW discussion in the UN First Committee. Allowing countries to blow off steam at the UN is a better alternative to their undertaking more concrete unilateral action, he argued.

¶12. (C) Formica said that NATO unity was of primary importance for Italy and agreed with the thrust of our points. Thinking ahead to the possible introduction of a NAC resolution in the UNFC, he said it would be difficult for Italy to support shutting off discussion. "Our policy is to respond substantively in the committee, rather than trying to use procedural tactics to avert a debate," he noted. Last year, Formica explained, Italy abstained on the NAC's NSNW resolution and it typically does not alter its vote from year to year absent a significant substantive change in the particular issue on the Committee's agenda.

¶13. (C) Responding to Sardi's suggestion that the NAC was almost certain to raise the NSNW at the 2005 NPT Revcon, POLMILOFF said the USG was concerned about that possibility and therefore wanted to prevent the NAC from using action in the First Committee as a springboard for a Revcon initiative.

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